

## Heritage Statement

**106 Highgate Road, London NW5 1PB**



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**Prepared for**

**Dr S. Michie**

**by**

**The Architectural History Practice Limited**

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany a scheme of alteration and extension to 106 Highgate Road, a Grade II listed building situated within the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. The statement meets the requirement of *The National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), paragraph 128, that 'local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'. It has been prepared by Andrew Derrick BA Hons AADipl Cons IHBC, a director of the Architectural History Practice (AHP). It should be read in conjunction with the drawings and other application documentation prepared by Snelling and Sherriff.

## 2.0 Building history and description



**Figure 1: 98-108 Highgate Road**

- 2.1 The property (at NGR TQ 28712 85664) forms part of a terrace comprising 98-108 (even) Highgate Road, also known as Fitzroy Terrace, which was listed Grade II in 1999. The list entry reads:

Terrace of 6 houses. Late C18, altered and repaired. Believed to have been built to house servants of the Fitzroy family. Yellow stock brick with red brick dressings; central name plaque. 3 storeys and semi-basements. 2 windows each except no.98 with 1. Semi-basement openings mostly segmental-arched; doors mostly part-glazed. Round-arched 1st floor sashes with gauged red brick heads and intersecting tracery; main entrances formerly at this level. 2nd and 3rd

floor, gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes. Coped parapet. INTERIORS: noted to retain good original features.

2.2 The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Appraisal (2009) states (para.7.7):

Nos 98-108 (Fitzroy Terrace) is an elegant terrace (listed) with mansard roof, dating from the early C19 with three storeys and semi-basement (unusual entrance level) occupying tight plot widths. Although not visible from the road, the terrace has an unusual, attractive rear elevation.

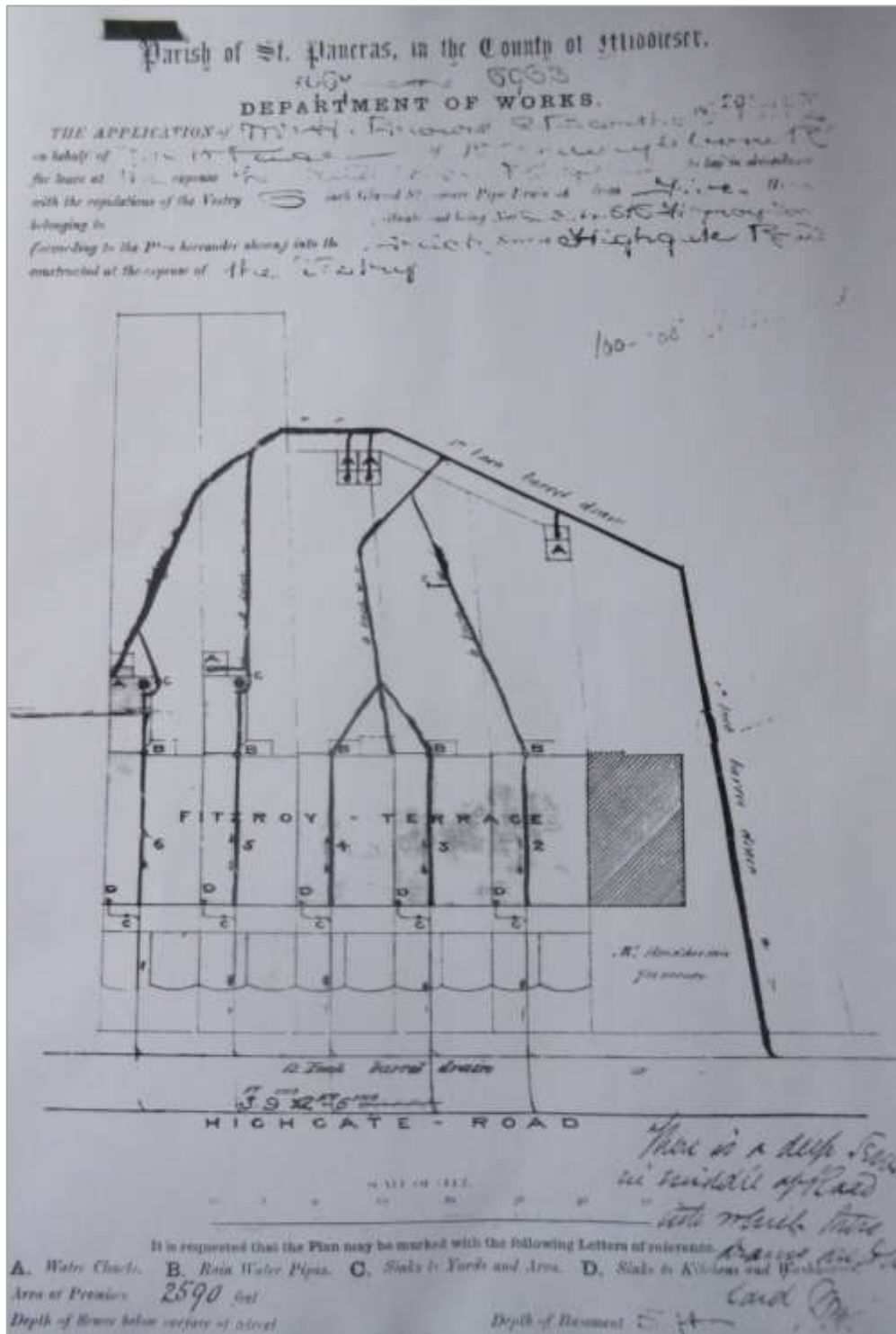
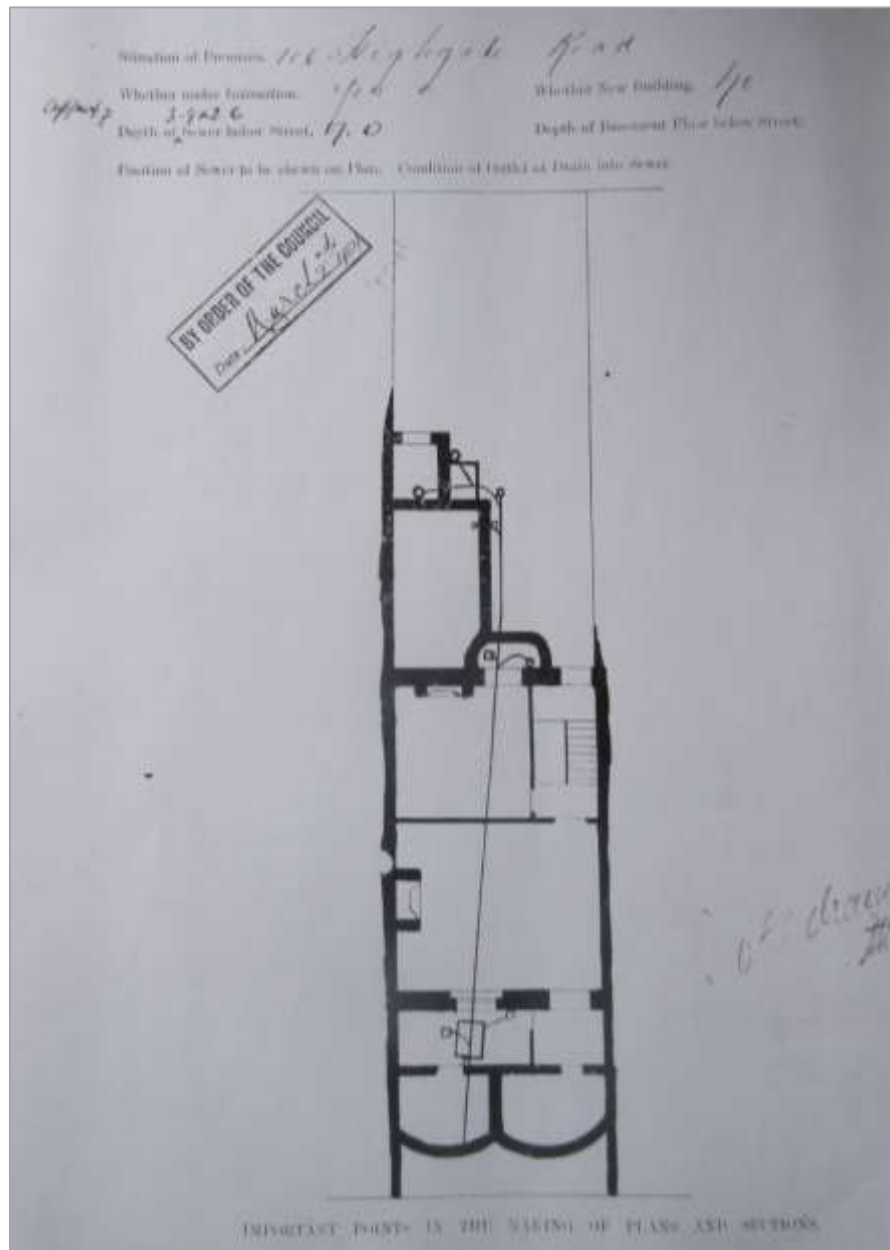


Figure 2: Drainage plan for nos. 100-108, 1890 (Camden Archives)

- 2.3 Until 1864, this part of Highgate Road was called Green Street, after Kentish Town village green. The list entry describes the terrace as late eighteenth century, but the *Survey of London*<sup>1</sup> records that it dates from about 1815 (rate books confirm that two houses were recently occupied at this time while four were unfinished). The list entry also suggests that the terrace may have been built to house servants of the Fitzroy family, which had extensive land holdings to the west of Highgate Road as well as in other parts of the capital (notably around Euston station).

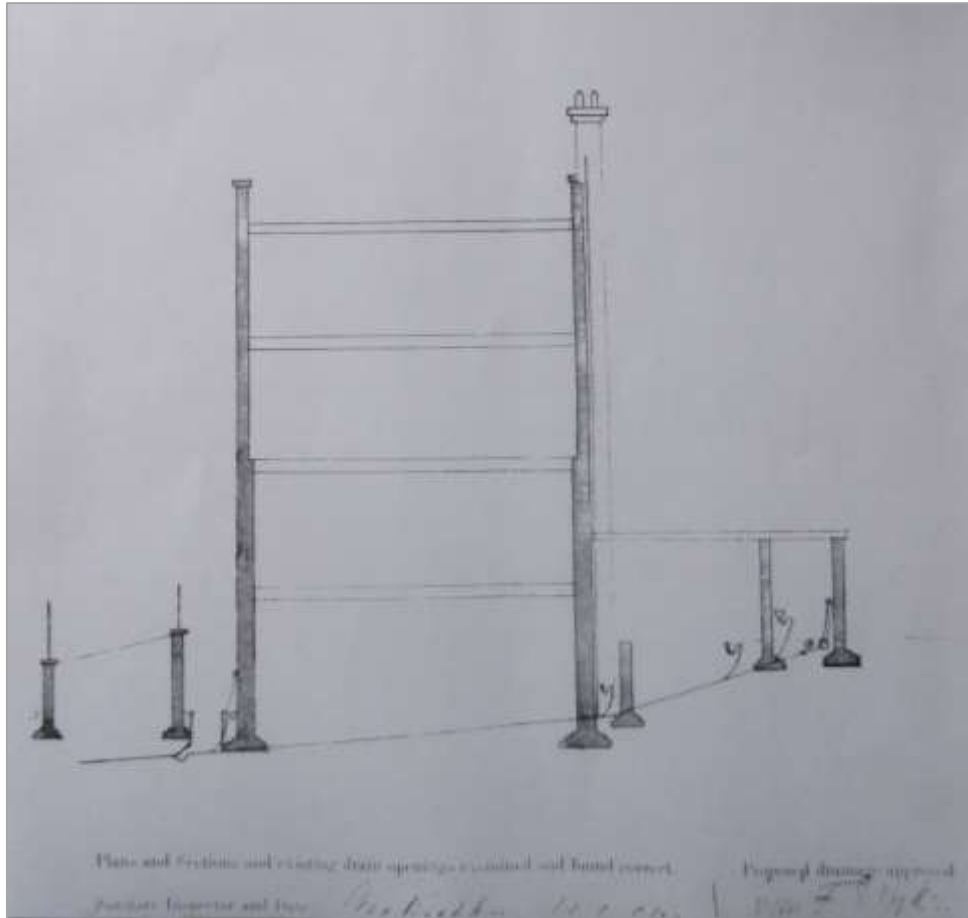


**Figure 3: Basement plan of no. 106, 1904 (Camden Archives)**

- 2.4 In common with the rest of the terrace, 106 Highgate Road is of four storeys, consisting of a lower ground floor at the same level as the front garden and

<sup>1</sup> *Survey of London: Volume XIX, the Parish of St Pancras, Part 2: Old St Pancras and Kentish Town, 1938*

street, an upper ground floor with an off-centre window (originally the front door, reached by steps), first floor and second (attic) floor. As with the rest of the terrace (apart from the slightly different and possibly later no. 98), it is of two windows' width. The date of the removal of the front entrance steps has not been established, but presumably took place while the buildings were still under one ownership, and not before 1904. Drainage plans of 1896 and 1904 in Camden Archives (figures 2, 3 and 4) show the original basement areas in front of the properties, and the section of 1904 at figure 4 shows the steps up to the upper ground floor entrance of no. 106. These plans also show outhouses attached to the rear of nos. 106 and 108 and (figure 3) a small lightwell to the rear lower ground floor room of no. 106.



**Figure 4: Section through no. 106, 1904 (Camden Archives)**

- 2.5 The site rises from front to back, as illustrated by the section at figure 4, hence the need for the lightwell that previously existed to the rear of no. 106. The striking and unusual rear elevation of each house is dominated by a brick chimney stack and a tall (twelve panes over twelve) sash window lighting the staircase (see composite photograph at figure 5). The roof consists of a shallow mansard to the rear attic storey, with a butterfly roof with central valley above, concealed at the front by a raised parapet. However, at no. 106 the butterfly roof has been removed at some point in the twentieth century and a roof terrace created, with a low metal rail to the front and picket fencing to the rear (figure 6).



**Figure 5: Composite photo of rear elevation**



**Figure 6: Roof terrace, front and rear**

- 2.6 On plan, the building consists of a large front room at the front of the property on each floor and a smaller back room and staircase compartment at the back. A full schedule of internal features is included in the Design and Access

Statement prepared by Snelling and Sherriff. Original internal features of note include:

- an open string stair of standard early nineteenth century pattern, with columnar newels, moulded hardwood handrail and two stick balusters per tread (photo on the right taken from the half landing between the first and second floors)
- Thin pine panelled partitions between the staircase enclosure and the rear rooms, stripped of their original paint (photo below shows the detail at upper ground floor level)
- Panelled doors with reeded architraves of Regency character at upper ground and first floors, but not at basement level, where the architrave is a poor modern copy
- Some plain moulded cornices e.g. at first floor level (as well as more recent ones of more ornamental character, e.g. at upper ground floor).





### **3.0 Current proposals**

3.1 Please see drawings and other planning documentation prepared by Snelling & Sherriff. Briefly, the proposals can be divided into four broad areas:

- Demolish an attached outbuilding at the rear, and build a new conservatory at lower and upper ground floor levels
- Partially reinstate the original roof form, with a remodelled roof terrace
- Carry out internal works to better insulate the property
- Sundry internal repairs and minor alterations, as itemised in the Design and Access Statement.

### **4.0 Policy context**

4.1 Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that: ‘In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting [...]’.

4.2 The NPPF (paragraph 126) enjoins local authorities to ‘recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place’.

4.3 Paragraphs 132-4 of the NPPF state:

‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance [...] should be wholly exceptional. [...] Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use’.

## **5.0 Impact assessment of current proposals**

5.1 The proposals have been devised to retain historic fabric and features which make a positive contribution to the character and significance of the building, to remove or remodel those features which detract from the building's significance and (where appropriate) to reinstate missing detail.

### *5.2 Rear extension*

5.2.1 The proposed rear addition will require the removal of an existing attached outbuilding and excavation of the lower ground floor area. Access to the new addition would be provided from a new doorway formed in the rear elevation at lower ground floor level. The existing door to the back garden from the half landing would be blocked.

5.2.2 The outbuilding is built of brick, with a monopitch corrugated sheet roof. It is of indeterminate date, but is shown on the drainage plans of 1896 and 1904. It has softwood windows of late twentieth century date. It is a building of low significance, and its removal would not be harmful in heritage terms, although a photographic record of the building would be appropriate.

5.2.3 The window at lower ground floor level and the brickwork below it are of late twentieth century date; there was previously a door here, leading into a small lightwell. Reinstatement of a door here would therefore not be harmful in heritage terms.

5.2.4 The door from the half landing is also of late twentieth century date, although the opening is presumed to be original. Removal of the door would not be harmful in heritage terms (a similar proposal was recently approved at no. 104 next door). The form of the original opening will be expressed internally in the new structure.

5.2.5 The proposed addition will be a modern lightweight structure, structurally independent of the listed building, and will not require any loss of significant historic fabric. It will extend no further into the back garden than the present outbuilding.

### *5.3 Roof alterations*

5.3.1 The present flat roof, with its disfiguring metal rail and (more conspicuously) picket fencing at the rear are negative features which detract from the character and appearance of the listed building. The proposal is to reduce the size of the roof terrace, with the disfiguring elements removed and with the original roof form and slate finish reinstated in large part. Unlike the existing picket fence, new glazed balustrades will be set back so as to be invisible in views towards the building either from the front or the rear. This will result in an enhancement of the integrity, character and appearance of the listed building, with no loss of historic fabric.

### *5.4 Insulation*

5.4.1 Proposed wall insulation involves going back to the bare brickwork, which will help the new insulation to line up with existing architraves, cornices and skirtings etc. There is already aluminium secondary glazing in some of the windows, which will be replaced by more suitable modern products. Double

glazing or window replacement is not proposed, apart from replacement of a modern casement window at rear attic level with a sash window. Where windows have shutters, they will be brought back into working order as a further means of improving insulation.

5.5 *Sundry repairs and alterations*

5.5 These are itemised in the Design and Access Statement. Many are minor in nature and may not need listed building consent. Proposals to replace inappropriate modern fireplaces and cornices with those of a more appropriate traditional pattern are to be welcomed in principle, and detailed approval can if necessary be made the subject of appropriate conditions.

**6.0 Conclusion**

6.1 No. 106 Highgate Road forms part of an important listed group in the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. The front elevation is prominent in public views and, the removal of the entrance steps apart, is little altered. The rear elevation, while not visible in public views, is striking and unusual and contributes positively to the building's significance. The building retains much of its original character and fitting out, but has been subjected to unsympathetic changes in more recent years. The current proposals seek to retain and repair those elements which contribute positively to the significance of the building, and to remove or modify and enhance those elements which detract from its significance. The creation of attractive new living accommodation will be conducive to the building's continuing occupation and maintenance and thereby its long-term conservation. No harm to the heritage asset or its setting would result from the proposals, indeed its character and setting would be preserved and (in the case of views towards the rear elevation) enhanced. The proposals therefore accord with the development plan, and as such constitute sustainable development which should be approved without delay (NPPF paragraph 14).

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